DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 300 117 PS 017 595

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TITLE A Consideration of How Cross-Age Tutoring Can Improve Kindergarten Childrens' Skills.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 62p.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cross Age Teaching; Educational Innovation; *Elementary School Students; Grade 2; *Kindergarten Children; Primary Education; *Program Implementation

ABSTRACT

A kindergarten teacher implemented a cross-age tutoring program pairing second-grade students with her kindergarteners for the purpose of improving the younger children's pre-reading and mathematics abilities, and increasing the older children's self-esteem and motivation for learning. Chapter I describes the focus of the study. The literature review in chapter II discusses benefits of cross-age tutoring to the tutor, the tutee, and the school. Also discussed are the importance of pairing students, and the relationship between training, ideas, and a successful program. Chapter III describes the implementation of cross-age tutoring activities. It was found that the paired children initially needed the support of structured activities planned by the teacher. But after four months of experience in cross-age activities, the second-graders were ready to take the initiative in planning. (Twenty-three references are listed.) (RH)

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A CONSIDERATION OF HOW CROSS-AGE TUTORING CAN IMPROVE KINDERGARTEN CHILDRENS' SKILLS

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CONTENTS

Chapter

I. FOCUS OF STUDY

Rationale 1

Focus of the Question 4

Research Methods 5

Timeline 8

Plan for Reading and Investigation . . . 9

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction 11

Cross-Age Tutoring Is Not A New Idea . . 13

Benefits to Tutor 17

Benefits To Tutee 22

Benefits To The School 25

The Significance Of Pairing Of The Students 28

The Relationship Between Training, Ideas, And A Successful Program 31

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Journal Notes and Observation Notes . . . 37

Conclusion 54

Interviews, Questionaires, and Student Work

Bibliography

CHAPTER 1

I. RATIONALE

As a kindergarten teacher with a class of twenty-two students I found that there were not enough classroom hours to individualize the way I would like to. Many kindergarten children need reinforcement to better understand a concept, while some need enrichment and extension activities. I found it is often difficult to give each child the individual attention he deserves and needs.

One of my goals each school year is to have my students master the district kindergarten objectives so as to move on to first grade. I was also especially interested in my students' social and emotional development, as well as their self-concept. It was important to me to find new ways to improve my teaching and in turn, help my students. Having worked in schools with grades kindergarten through sixth, kindergarten through fourth, and now kindergarten through second grade, I have questioned ways to utilize other students in my school to help my kindergarten students increase their basic concepts and social skills.

The more reading I did on Cross-Age Tutoring the more I believed that children can benefit greatly by working with other children. I wanted to utilize the second graders in our school to work with my kindergarteners. I felt confident that the children involved may benefit from the academic work and the social interactions. Casanova (1986) explains how Cross-Age

Tutoring gives students the opportunity to work with each other and shifts the responsibility for learning beyond the teacher to the students. She is of the opinion that the students become more responsible and sympathetic to others. How helpful that would be to all children in all of their school and life experiences. In Cross-Age Tutoring children are paired with students from another age or grade level for work in almost any area or skill. Of course, this has been going on since Greek and Roman times. Certainly, it was used to help the students and teachers in one room schoolhouses very effectively. In a program developed in Lindsey, California, Nancy Muller (1974) experienced a great deal of success with both the older students and younger. What better way for a child to feel good about himself than to help a younger child and be "the teacher"? Excitement is described in many of the articles I have read therefore encouraging me to try Cross-Age Tutoring in my own classroom.

I frequently observe Cross-Age Tutoring in my own home and have often enlisted the help and expertise of my seventh grader to work with her first and fourth grade sisters. However, in recent months my fourth grader and first grader had a favorite afterschool and weekend activity. They each invited one friend over and played school. This is a very serious activity and the first graders have picked up concepts they have had trouble with in school. Money and time were mastered very quickly after a little 'one on one' time was spent with an "older teacher".

Our Kindergarten Reading Basal has suggested using Wordless

Picture Books to stimulate language development. I had used these extensively in previous years to work on many skills, but wanted to explore this further. As Fannie Wiley Preston and Dr. Ann Ellis (1983) describe it, when used with Cross-Age Tutoring they improved oral language, sequencing, predicting, vocabulary development and other important Pre-Reading Skills worked on in kindergarten.

My school district is located in the Northwest suburban area of Chicago. Some of our children come from low-income/blue collar families, while the majority come from upper-middle class/ white collar homes. Since the district is bursting at its seams with many new housing developments our classes of twenty-one and twenty-two students are growing in number. I teach in a primary building consisting of eight to nine sections each of kindergarten, first, and second grade.

My students come to kindergarten with an equally wide range of abilities. Some children have poor language development and little knowledge of letters, while others are reading fluently and have had a great amount of experiences in their short lives.

I was looking forward to seeing results and positive signs of development in my kindergarteners and in the second graders through the use of Cross-Age Tutoring.

II. FOCUS OF THE QUESTION

How can Cross-Age Tutoring improve my kindergarten childrens' skills? I planned to pair my kindergarteners up with second grade students to work on a one to one basis on Math and Reading activities. The second grade students were 'inserviced' on the protocol of working with kindergarten children. I was looking at how Cross-Age Tutoring affects all of the students' academic achievement and social interactions.

My kindergarteners were taught our District Curriculum and I used Cross-Age Tutoring to help enrich and remediate my students on a one to one level.

In helping the second graders to understand the positive role they needed to take, I hoped to see an increase in their self-esteem and motivation for learning.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

I planned on doing the observation and data collecting part of my project during the school year 1987-88. However, I did try some pairing of students with second graders at the end of the 1986-87 school year to give me an idea of the avenues I might explore. In order to make Cross-Age Tutoring successful, I planned to wait until October to do any training with the tutors. By this time the second graders were ready for a new challenge. Then, during a few of my free periods, I met with the second graders involved. The 'tutors' were inserviced on how to tutor through discussions and role playing activities. Because I knew many of the second graders, I was especially looking forward to seeing their own academic and social maturation through this project. I hoped to motivate the second graders to be helpers while learning and reviewing old concepts. Specifically, I stressed using praise, encouragement, and techniques for working with younger children. Almost all of the second graders had gone through our kindergarten Math curriculum which involves many manipulatives. I anticipated that they would only need a quick review of games and materials. We also role played and practiced ways to 'teach' colors, shapes, letters, sounds, and to read a story to kindergarteners.

The second grade teacher and I met to choose the pairs appropriately. Dr. G. E. Coon (1985) feels that it is helpful

to pair children according to their interests or common trait. This was one way of pairing the children since many are in extra-curricular activities together or are neighborhood friends. I planned to do more reading in this area during the summer.

During the tutoring process informal lunch periods were to be used to meet with the tutors at regular intervals. Therefore, we could discuss the tutoring sessions and I could get feedback and suggestions from the second graders. As the project took shape, I skipped the lunches and made use of my free periods for our discussions.

We also worked out any difficult situations and supported each other. I intended to have the children work together two to three times a week for approximately fifteen minutes. I aimed to meet with the second graders for one lunch period each week. This did not materialize due to busy schedules on both the second grade teachers and my part. We ended up meeting once a week and having one discussion a week.

I was planning to gather data through conversations with the second graders and the kindergarteners. I was also observing and interviewing the students. Specifically, I noted how quickly the children grasped a new concept and how motivated the children were. Certainly, I attempted to tailor-make the activites to meet the needs of specific students. When interviewing the children, I hoped to monitor any difficult situations and relationships. In these cases, attempts at cooperative learning groups would be used to work out problems. This wasn't necessary

since the relationships worked out fine. Group discussions would also be of great help to me while the program was in progress.

Journal keeping was an important part of my observations. A journal entry after each tutoring session and our group meeting helped me key in on how the children were progressing and how the Cross-Age Tutoring process could be improved. It seemed like a great deal of work at the time but it helped me monitor the program and choose my activities.

Therefore, my research methods included group discussions with the tutors, observations, interviews with the kindergarteners and second graders, keeping a journal, and tape recording some of the pairs during a tutoring session.

IV. TIMELINE

April 1987 - Finished preliminary reading and the first copy of my proposal

May 1987 - Completed my proposal

Summer 1987 - Reviewed the literature and planned some activities for the tutoring project

Sept. 1987 - Wrote Chapter 2

Oct. 1987 - Inserviced second grade students on tutoring techniques

Nov-Feb 1988 - Implemented Cross-Age Tutoring and gathered observations and data

Feb-Apr 1988 - Analyzed data and wrote Chapter 3

V. PLAN FOR READING AND INVESTIGATION

When I chose my topic I was uncertain whether or not there would be an adequate amount of material written on Cross-Age Tutoring. Apparently, I was mistaken. I had read many interesting articles and books on my topic and planned to continue my reading during the summer. Articles, books, and Eric Documents would most certainly give me more background on Cross-Age Tutoring. The methods used for Cross-Age Tutoring, age groups taught and research done was of specific interest to me. As a result of my readings, I hoped to decide how I would pair the children and plan the specific activities I intended to have the children accomplish.

Some of the questions I was hoping to answer through my readings were: (1) What are the specific skills needed to inservice the second graders? (2) What motivating factors can be used in getting the tutors interested? (3) What is the 'best way' for my students to be paired up with the older children (ie. lows with lows and highs with highs, or lows with highs)? 4) How do I start the tutoring process? (5) Do I want to use the playground and/or playtime for developing relationships? (6) Should I only concentrate on developing pre-reading skills through wordless picture books or should I vary the subject matter and activity each session or week?

I also planned to speak to teachers in a neighboring school

district where a form of Cross-Age Tutoring was being used with first and second graders. When I spoke to the teachers I asked them: (1) How did you choose the pairs of children? Their answer was that they chose pairs on a very random basis. They let their older children pick names from a hat. (2) How long and how frequently do the children work with each other? (3) Who decided on the activities and specifically, what were they?, and (4) How did you inservice the tutors? If possible, I would visit one of their classrooms to observe Cross-Age Tutoring first hand.

What I found out was that their idea of Cross-Age Tutoring was to have the pairs work together for special events, such as Book Week or an All School Day. They mainly had the older children reading to the younger children and making book marks or pictures. It was a start and a success and I was glad to hear Cross-Age Tutoring was being done in any way, shape, or form since I was now a proponent of it.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

I am excited to begin my project and have spent a great deal of time trying to absorb and sort out all of my readings. I am interested in considering how Cross-Age Tutoring can increase my kindergarten students' skills. I also want to focus on how it can benefit my children socially and how Cross-Age Tutoring will benefit the children in second grade who will be doing the "helping". Lastly, I now realize how important Cross-Age Tutoring is to enhance my curriculum.

After reading Samuel L. Blumenfeld's book, How To Tutor, I am concerned with the 'why' even more than the 'how'. For the last six years I have tutored first through sixth graders in my home and it is of great concern to me how the classroom just doesn't meet the needs of all the students. Blumenfeld feels that the educational setting isn't conducive for children who have difficulty learning, but also children who are of average intelligence aren't learning what they should.

Many student tutoring programs have evolved from this horrid fact. Many of these programs have also been instituted to help the tutor as much as the tutee. Blumenfeld feels that proper tutoring at the preschool level or in the first and second grades, as a preventative measure "can make sure that the child has the basic foundation on which he can build his social achievement".

In the articles, books, and documents that I have read, five major ideas have come up many times. The first is the benefits of Cross-Age Tutoring Programs, specifically the benefits to the tutors and the tutees. I have also found that it is important to understand the benefits of Cross-Age Tutoring to the school.

The history of Cross-Age Tutoring and of children working with each other is important and interesting. Another major idea is the importance of the training of the tutors and its relationship to the program's success. Last, I was interested in the research on the best way to pair the students.

All of these ideas together will help me develop a program that will best suit my needs. Again, I am amazed at the amount of interesting reading and information, as well as the wonderful teaching and innovative ideas that have been going on for hundreds of years. I am also interested in why Cross-Age Tutoring has not been done more in recent years in the areas where I have taught.

CROSS-AGE TUTORING IS NOT A NEW IDEA

Cross-Age Tutoring has been used for hundreds of years. Back in Roman culture when the concept was new, it was also known as peer teaching. In the Roman culture there were "student teachers". This was very literal where the older boys helped the younger boys with their letters and words.

Lilya Wagner discusses peer and Cross-Age Teaching as it progressed through the ages. During the Middle Ages education centered around the church and the concept was not used at all. However, during the Renaissance and the Reformation period Cross-Age Teaching appeared again. The 1440's was a time for educating girls as well as boys and peer teaching was widely used at Eton College and at Westminster.

In 1553 cross-age and peer teaching appeared in a new form. In Portugal it was used in Jesuit education. The students were divided into groups of ten with a captain for each group. A great deal of responsibility was given to each captain and the program was quite successful.

In the seventeenth century peer teaching was used a great deal. Educators agreed that the individual method of instruction was most effective and thus was emphasized in teaching, along with peer teaching. The students were put into small groups with monitors. The monitors were usually two 'seniors' who were to help younger students. From this time came a man named Comenius, who in 1628 wanted children to have a well rounded education and

used peer teaching to achieve his goal. From Comenius comes the essence of Cross-Age and Peer Teaching, "teaching takes place when knowledge that has been acquired is communicated to fellow pupils or other companions. He who teaches others, teaches himself." On this man's teachings 360 years ago, I based my research project.

After all of this wonderful knowledge was imparted there was no record of peer teaching in the United States during the eighteenth century. Yet, in 1823 Andrew Bell paired off his classes into tutors and pupils. All of the children became tutors for the class below them. It was indeed a successful exercise in Cross-Age Teaching. During the nineteenth century Pestalozzi used Cross-Age Teaching a great deal. Many schools were based on this method for many years.

Gartner, Kohler, and Reissman also write of the one room schoolhouses of the nineteenth century. The Lancaster System and Montessori Schools used Cross-Age Teaching as a basic tenet. It enabled the teacher to keep her sanity as well as help the students. Here the general emphasis was on improving the learning of the tutee. Research found that the tutee may have improved in skill and reading level, but not a great deal.

In the early 1960's Frank Reissman observed Cross-Age Teaching first hand. He observed how the tutors were so "turned on" to school and how their self esteem was heightened. He also observed how the tutors were learning how to learn and how they began to transfer their learning. Again, thank you to Comenius

for figuring this all out back in 1628. We've realized for years that this works, so why haven't we been doing it in our classrooms?

Also, in the 1960's a wonderful program called Learning Through Teaching (LTT) was born. Most of LTT and similar programs began in poverty areas and were designed to have all children be successful and learn effectively. Although LTT is not the same as Cross-Age Teaching, I mention it here because it has some of the same goals and outcomes. The children felt successful while it lessened competition.

Programs popped up all across the country during the late 60's and through the 70's. They had as many names as different methods and teaching styles. Gartner went into much detail describing them and I felt that each was positive in its own way. Often test scores didn't show a huge jump in achievement but self esteem heightened and/or friendships bloomed.

The age span between tutors and tutees also changed from program to program. I am doing my project with young tutors and tutees. This is unique and exciting to me.

One program I especially found interesting was done in New Mexico in the 70's. The teenage tutors taught the crafts of their Indian tribe to the younger children. This was carried on so as to keep their culture alive.

I found it extremely interesting to read about how Cross-Age Teaching is not a new idea at all and to see how the past can

help my students' future. This also showed me how trends in education repeat themselves over and over and over again.

BENEFITS TO TUTORS

The reason that I went into teaching, stayed with teaching, and love teaching is simply the kids!! The challenge of teaching is to meet the needs of twenty different personalities each morning and twenty more each afternoon. Over and over again I have read that Cross-Age Tutoring is very beneficial to the tutor, as well as the child being tutored. I'd like to address the benefits to the tutors.

Many educators have observed Cross-Age Tutoring and summed up their opinions on the benefits. J. Carl Fleming dwells on how it helps a child to become more organized. The children he worked with were sixth graders who tutored first graders. He felt that the benefits of learning to prepare a lesson, and follow through with "teaching" the lesson, were terrific for his twelve-year-olds. The tutors learned to organize their time and by seeing the results they became more enthusiastic learners.

Anne S. Grossman worked with much older children than I am involved with, but the benefits seem to have universal value. She felt her tutors had more time to review concepts and more time for problem solving. Since problem solving is a life skill that we all need to develop and use, it is of importance to develop it as early as possible.

In Children As Teachers, Vernon Allen emphasizes the scholastic effects provided when older students have a tutoring relationship with younger children. His research has shown that

the tutor's own performance improves as much as the tutees. He also writes about the social benefits of Cross-Age Tutoring. I am particularly interested in this part of the exchange. Allen writes of the friendships that emerge; the warmth he has seen along with humor, personal information exchange, and the positive effect of joking around. These are important qualities that should be developed during a tutoring relationship. I incorporated this idea by starting my first session with a popcorn party and partner interview. Allen's hypothesis is that success or failure is dependent on the kind of role relationship that emerges.

Sherry Walker-Taylor echoes Allen's feelings. She is an Art teacher who used Cross-Age Tutoring very effectively. She saw the friendships that enhanced her tutoring sessions. She also was very pleased to see the enthusiasm and creativity her tutors suddenly developed for their content areas. She described the planning and goal setting the tutors developed. Walker-Taylor and I have many goals in common.

On a more concrete level, I hope to work with the second graders on planning and achieving goals. I also hope to see a great deal of enthusiam and role modeling that will carry over to my kindergarteners. If the second graders can be motivated and excited about the activites we do, my children may feel the same way.

According to Coon and Palmer (1985), "Perhaps even more important (than motivation), however, is the fact that all of

these students involved in these learning experiences that take place across grade levels gain an increased awareness of their learning community and their own competence as they realize that they can function as teacher as well as learner, no matter where they stand in the class." This is a very important statement because the benefit for the slower learner is that he can still succeed and help another child to learn. The positive effects on a child's self esteem can be great. This also helps all children see that education is a constant learning process. No matter how much they know, they can always learn from another. For the tutor this gives her greater self-esteem as a 'teacher', aids her own cognitive development through review and reteaching known concepts, and gives her social gains. As Berliner and Cassanova (1986) wrote, the tutors learn empathy. A lower achieving tutor will probably be more sympathetic to a younger child. She should understand what it's like to struggle and hopefully this will transfer to the younger child and help lessen his frustration. The tutor also learns to be more responsible for her learning when another person is involved.

Peggy Lippitt did a great deal of work on the benefits of Cross-Age Tutoring. She felt that the tutors are using and applying their knowledge and are making a contribution as a volunteer. I was thrilled to read that Lippitt's feelings were that a friend who is two to four years older can have a working relationship that is less distant and detached from the rest of a younger child's life than can an adult. Because my "helpers" are

two years older than my kindergarteners, I think the friendships and role modeling will be important. Lippitt discusses how older children who are doing poorly can have a positive experience merely by being recognized as experts by younger children who really need help. Also, the older students ended up with more understanding with a concept that was originally difficult for them. The older also plays a constructive role in socializing with the younger child.

Lippitt concurs with Allan Gartner that the tutors learn more when they "teach". They are also provided with reassurance and confidence. As Gartner says, "It has long been obvious that children learn from their peers, but a more significant observation is that children learn more from teaching other children" (1971, pg.1). He talks about how every child needs the opportunity to play the teacher because through playing that role he may learn how to learn. This brings to mind my children playing school at home and the little schoolhouse that is permanently set up in my basement. This is great because girls play school a great deal of time but boys don't often choose to play teacher. If boys and girls alike are given these opportunities they may explore wider career possibilites for their future as well as be getting leadership training.

Another benefit for the tutor is the trust and responsibility they can develop through their relationship with the adults involved. The tutors need to learn to verbalize their problems and work them out with adults. I need to build a good

rapport with the second graders and hope that my before and after meetings will help to achieve this. Again research shows that the tutors return from the tutoring sessions with increased will to work.

Had I realized there were so many benefits to the tutor I might have encouraged a teacher of older children to try this also! My goal has changed to also increase the skills and self concept of the second graders as well as the kindergarteners.

BENEFITS TO TUTEES

One of my goals in choosing this research project was to better meet the needs of my students and increase their knowledge of kindergarten concepts and self esteem. I want each child to leave my class feeling great about himself and about our school.

The benefits of Cross-Age Tutoring to the children being tutored are similar to the benefits to the tutors previously talked about. Some of the benefits to the tutees apply to young children such as mine more specifically.

Preston and Ellis did research on the effects of Cross-Age Tutoring with picture books. They found that when the children worked with someone older it increased and stimulated their oral language. Working with an older child, even a few years older, encouraged academic growth in other skills necessary for reading. Cross-Age Tutoring also helped the tutee develop their cognitive and affective skills.

Peggy Lippitt concentrated her efforts on the benefits to the tutee. She felt it really increases the self-esteem of the young and said, "Having a big friend who cares gives a younger child an added feeling of worth and perpetuates a caring climate" (1976, pg.176). I feel that each child needs a special friend. This is one time when no one is excluded. Lippitt also spoke of the importance to the younger child of a friendly relationship on the playground. The younger child will model the behavior of the older children and may echo his attitudes. I

keep thinking about my Billy who tries to be so tough. With his older friend he may feel like he's not top bananna in kindergarten but may model some more positive behaviors.

Coon feels that Cross-Age Tutoring provides the students with an audience and he feels that a major advantage of Cross-Age Tutoring is a reason to write. I plan to do some reading and writing with my pairs so this was of interest to me.

Nancy Muller did a Cross-Age Tutoring project in the mid 1970's. Many of her findings on the benefits to students tutored are my very objectives. She found that Cross-Age Tutoring increased the student's basic skills, provided individual instruction, and was an excellent mode for reinforcing concepts. It also motivated the students to 'be like the tutors'. Most of all, it let the tutees recognize that someone cared about his learning.

Gartner feels Cross-Age Tutoring is important for the tutee because "group instruction is inadequate to stimulate and guide the learning of children whose backgrounds, interests, habits, or practices are markedly different from the typical ones for whom the instruction program was designed." We all have many children in our classes of diverse backgrounds and interests. Cross-Age Tutoring can help meet the needs of these students.

Coon feels that another benefit to the students is for the child who is the oldest in his family. This child or an only child needs to have another child to look up to for guidance and help. It's also beneficial for the child who never had a

chance for close observation or companionship of an older child of the same sex.

Through the closeness that could result from a tutoring relationship and the individual attention that the tutee receives, he benefits from the special attention, individual explanations, immediate feedback and personalization.

J. Carl Fleming also felt the basic benefits to the students were that each child gets the individual attention of another person. It gives each child a chance to be seen and heard and a feeling of importance.

Obviously, the effects of Cross-Age Tutoring on the tutors and tutees are so great, I feel I can't go wrong. I'm confident that my project will benefit all of the children involved as well as my school.

THE BENEFITS OF CROSS-AGE TUTORING TO THE SCHOOL

Every time I am asked a question about another teacher's ability I realize that I could never answer honestly, even if I wanted to! A school is made up of many separate rooms and behind closed doors magical and mysterious things can happen that many times no one ever knows about. This is one large problem that Cross-Age Tutoring can help rectify.

Alan Gartner, Mary Kohler, and Frank Reissman have much to say on this subject in Children Teach Children. Their research indicates that Cross-Age Tutoring cuts across grade levels and provides a sense of community within the school. This is one of the goals of my project. I hope that my Cross-Age Tutoring experiences can become a model or incentive for other teachers. I teach in a school with eight to nine sections each of Kindergarten, first, and second grade. We could do a great deal of pairing of children. I agree with Gartner that children and teachers can see new uses for subject matter and relationships in the units of study.

Research has shown that the amount of teaching time has increased in schools that used Cross-Age Teaching. When small children have a big brother or big sister figure to guide them during the year, they can increase their knowledge as well as their self-concept. There have also been less social problems on the playground when the older children are role models for younger children.

The benefits to the teachers are great. Cross-Age Tutoring can help the teacher develop insight into the teacher/learner process. When we stand aside and watch the tutors mimic us in the teaching process we can see how we work. We, as teachers, can see how the children learn and thus improve our teaching tactics.

The teacher's role expands to that of a resource person or facilitator (Brandes and Ginnis 1986). While the teacher knows that the children are getting individual attention and help with specific skills, he can also devote more time to the needs of specific students. A shift in responsibility is a key factor here. The attention in the classroom shifts and is on the pair of students, not the teacher. At the same time dependence is on the other student in the pair, not on the teacher.

Peggy Lippitt has written about the positive effects of planning with a teacher of another grade level. I am looking forward to that relationship and to becoming more in tune with the second grade curriculum.

Cross-Age Tutoring incorporates many of the features predicted to be trends of the future. Two of the major trends are the use of individualized instruction and the use of nonprofessionals in the classroom.

J. Carl Fleming, in his article "Pupil Tutors and Tutees Learn Together" discussed a Cross-Age Tutoring project with sixth graders and first graders. One of the major advantages that he found was that it brought teachers, principals, and students

together in a team approach to learning. The older students were called "friends", exactly what I want my second grader helpers to be called.

I feel that Cross-Age Tutoring can have a positive effect on the entire school atmosphere. Hopefully, this will become a part of the District 102 curriculum focus for the future. Accordingly, it is my intention to document my experience with Cross-Age Tutoring in my classroom so as to expand the program and benefit Pritchett School.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PAIRING OF THE STUDENTS

I was particularly interested in the research done on how children are paired with each other and if it has as effect on the program's success. When I pair my children with the second graders, I want to do it with a knowledge of what is best for both sets of students.

Allen Gartner feels that it is not important how you pair the children. He feels that the emphasis should be on the concepts and materials taught. He suggested pairing children on an informal basis with some self-selection. If there is a problem that arises, Gartner feels it is advantageous to do some switching of pairs. However, if role modeling is important Gartner agrees that the teachers should take that into consideration.

Personally, I agree with one of Peggy Lippitt's rules of thumb; a teacher shouldn't put a slow older child with a very quick younger child. I need to take this into consideration because of the two grade difference between my tutors and tutees. Eiseman and Lippitt feel that this is not as important if the tutor is three or more years older than the tutee. Then the tutor has an older and wiser image even if he may be slightly immature academically or emotionally.

Vernon L. Allen states that the most important ingredient to a successful pair may be the level of competence between the tutor and the tutee. If the tutor's ability is inferior in

relationship to his peers, yet superior to the tutee, he should still be able to help the tutee a great deal.

I was pleased to read about Allen's ideas on the tutor-tutee age differential. At first I was uneasy about a two grade difference between my tutors and tutees. However, as I became more involved in my reading, I felt that any cross-age teaching situation will successfully benefit many of the children involved. Allen feels that there is little evidence on an optimum age difference. He has observed programs with adults helping kindergarteners, programs with children helping those a grade lower, and some in the same grade doing peer tutoring. He feels that when there is a greater age difference it results in somewhat better tutee performance. This may be true, but there may be a better tutor gain in material that is still familiar to them when the age gap is closer. Also, interaction has been found to be more pleasant when the children are closer in age.

Many writers emphasize that tutoring shouldn't replace regular classroom instruction. Because cross-age teaching is meant to supplement and remediate, a close age difference might work well.

Tutors have also found to be effective with two to three tutees. In some programs less motivated students worked better together, while in others a highly motivated tutee encouraged a less motivated tutor.

Stephen E. Blume observed a program of one-to-one tutoring for a year. Fourth graders worked with kindergarteners for one

year to individualize and reinforce lessons. The children were paired up for the entire time on an informal basis. They stayed together for the year unless there were personality problems. The older children developed pride, responsibility, and reviewed their concepts. The younger children increased their self-concept, enthusiasm, and felt good about their new found knowledge.

After much reading on the subject of pairing, I have decided to list my children from high to low and have the second grade teacher do the same. Then we will sit down together and discuss potential behavior problems, motivational problems, and socialization needs. We will pair the children, keeping all of these factors in mind. I will certainly be observing and discussing the pairing with the children. As the project is ongoing I don't anticipate any problems, but if there are I will be open to making changes in the pairing.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAINING AND IDEAS AND A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

The last area that I was concerned with was that of the importance of training the tutors and the materials to be used during the project. Peggy Lippitt discussed the importance of training the 'tutors'. The Lippitts both felt that it is always important to have an adult handy to help during the sessions. The Lippitts also felt that it was important to have a formal pre-service and inservice training. The pre-service training should be short and not overly directed. They are advocates of telling the tutors who goes where, when, and what is expected of him. With my second grade tutors I took this advice and am trying to keep my instructions explicit and short.

In Children Teach Children, Gartner disagrees with the philosophy of formal inservice. He feels that the children need an opportunity to explore and discover on their own. Then the children doing the tutoring will be less likely to mimic their former teachers. He also warns the receiving teacher (in this case, me) not to treat the tutors like they are my own students. He talks about developing a positive relationship with the tutors. I can see Gartner's point of view and will heed his warnings, however, I feel my second grade tutors need some formal guidance. Gartner and I do agree, though, that the teacher in charge has the role of supporting growth not controlling the situation. Support is the key word here, very different from

control. Gartner does discuss time as an important factor for a successful program - time to plan, time for the teachers involved to meet, time for the pairs to meet together, and time for the teacher to meet with the tutors.

I agree with Gartner on the importance of an adequate amount of time to have a successful program. I am going to try to take these factors into consideration in implementing my program.

Manette Swett wrote a charming article entitled, "This Year I Got My Buddy To Laugh." She worked with five year olds and fourth graders. She discussed many motivational factors for tutors and gave many tips on questions for the teacher to ask the tutors to develop interest. I used some of these ideas in my initial meeting with my tutors. Some personal questions to the older students, such as, "What can you do to help a five year old have a better kindergarten year?" or "What do you feel good about doing?" will help the tutors think about their purpose and importance in the project. Swett also suggests having the tutors write their feelings and ideas in a journal. Swett's article gave me the idea to have an informal get-together first, such as our popcorn party. I will also take her suggestion that the tutors should plan some activities. I should plan some sessions and hopefully some activities will evolve. Stephen C. Blume also warns the teacher in charge to prepare the tutors to help their partner without overpowering the tutee.

Lippitt, Eiseman, and Lippitt discussed many successful formal training programs of the sixties and seventies. The

Pocoima Program out of Los Angeles, California was based on Cross-Age Tutoring and very successful. It opened many other facets of school programs. In the Pocoima Program the tutors were trained for the independent supervision in a kindergarten room or for teaching specific instructional objectives. The training for the independent supervision included an initial explanation by the teacher, weekly meetings to review and plan, weekly meeting to discuss performance and problems, and on-the-spot training and help. When the children were to 'teach' a specific concept they were trained the same way, used much role playing and journal writing.

The Ontario-Montclair, California Program of 1970 was also discussed. This was very formal with tests given to measure academic growth, self-concept, social acceptance, discipline, and attendance. In this program there was improvement in all areas.

Vernon Allen described the Harrison-Structured Tutoring Project. Harrison stated, on the basis of fours years of research, that tutoring doesn't benefit students in most instances unless it is approached in a highly structured way. His program used programmed tutoring to teach beginning reading fourteen minutes daily. It also used directed tutoring with current classroom teaching methods. There was significant reading improvement in the children tutored twice a day and the math results were most beneficial to innercity children. Although my program will <u>not</u> be this formal or structured, I found it informative to read about what was done.

David Berliner and Ursula Casanova wrote about a three step tutoring technique to tutor reading. The three steps included pause before calling attention to the reader's error, prompt - help readers figure out clues to decode word, and praise, making sure tutors praise more. They suggested training using role playing, having tutors work in pairs to practice, pair with own sex, and monitor progress by listening to tapes and talking with students. I am trying to incorporate some of these ideas into my project.

Children Teach Children discusses how the receiving teacher should lead discussions, role playing, and simulation activities on specific subject matter during the program. After each tutoring session both the tutors and tutees should evaluate the program. Sometimes they should evaluate the program together and sometimes apart. I feel this is very important. Gartner found three problems with the tutoring. He felt there was a need for more training and support for the tutors, the school should be organized so that there would be time for planning, and there is a need for increasing the involvement of parents.

Peggy Lippitt emphasizes the need for a dedicated staff with skills to implement a program. She discusses the need for two teachers, an administrator, and seminar leader. She said the tutors need the practice in how to relate and how to promote a positive self-concept. In her opinion, the kindergarten teacher was the most important in making the program work.

There was also much written on materials and ideas for

Cross-Age Tutoring. I was intrigued with Preston's feelings on Wordless Picture Books. She did research on how these books provide thinking strategies, increase vocabulary and literal and inferential thinking skills and are a springboard for language experience. I plan to have the second graders use wordless picture books with my children. Her ingredients for a successful program are knowledge and planning, selecting appropriate material with human interest, training the tutors effectively, on-going monitoring and support, and evaluation. Her training included providing clear directions, giving a specific learning task, and providing the pair with specific learning materials.

After reading about many programs and the materials and ideas used, I felt they were sorted into six areas. I will try to have my pairs do activities from each area to see what works best and what the children like best. These areas include the following concepts and skills; motor skills, music, writing, pre-reading, math, and science. In the Motor Skill area throwing, catching, jumping rope, hopping, skipping, and running are included. Playing games is also important; following rules and directions and simply having fun.

In the area of Music my children can do sing-alongs and learn new songs from the second graders. We can also do rhythm games, poems, and use instruments.

To develop writing skills in both the second graders and kindergarteners we can label art work, make signs and drawings, dictate stories and play copying games. The Pre-Reading skills

are many. Some of the ones I would like to try are using flash cards for practicing letter recognition, word recognition, and beginning sounds. I might also let the children work on picture dictionaries together. They can also work on colors, matching colors, color words with colors, games, and labeling picures. Rhyming and oral language development, as well as, matching, tracing, and making clay shapes are activities I'd like to use. The second graders may be able to show my children how to go to the library and find something specific.

In the area of Math; number practice, patterning, number writing, flash cards, and games can be used. I hope to have the children do some science experiments with magnets, magnifying, water, or other concepts.

I think that ideally the list could go on and on. I'm sure that as I do some activities with my pairs, they will come up with lots more they'd like to do.

Again, my readings and review of literature has helped me to sort out everything I have read on Cross-Age Tutoring. I feel I am able to pick and choose which ideas will work for me and implement them. I'm at the point of beginning and I can't wait.

CHAPTER 3

I officially started my Cross-Age Tutoring project on October 22nd., 1987. After seven weeks of school the children in my class were used to the routine of kindergarten and I was sure the same was true of the second graders. I went into the second grade room when my children were in gym and I introduced myself to my 'helpers'. I had only had one of the students in kindergarten but most of these children had gone to Pritchett for the last few years and knew me and I knew many of them. We talked about things they remembered liking about kindergarten. Most of them mentioned blocks, legos, toys, and the rice table. This discussion could have gone on for quite a while but I felt it necessary to cut it off and move on to my reason for coming.

I really stressed how grown-up the second graders seemed and how lucky they were to be the oldest students at Pritchett School while my children were the youngest. I told them how wonderful I thought it would be if they would each be a special friend to a child in my morning class. I handed one of the boys the invitation my class wrote, inviting them to a Popcorn Party on Monday at 11:15. We discussed things that they could do with my class and how they could help my students with many things we learn in kindergarten. They expressed interest in coming to the Popcorn Party and meeting a friend.

I showed them an interview sheet I had made up. We talked about the purpose of an interview. Many of the second graders

didn't know what an interview was. I explained how an interview with their kindergarten friend would help them know more about their friend.

The second graders were very interested in knowing if they could be paired with children they already knew. After discussing this, only two children knew someone from my class and made requests. I told them I'd see what I could do about it! When I left their classroom they seemed excited about coming on Monday.

I prepared my children for our project by explaining to them that they would have a special friend from Mrs. Walsh's second grade. I told them they'd get a chance to play games and do many different things with their friend. We talked about having a Popcorn Party to meet their new friends. They were very excited about the whole idea, especially the Popcorn Party.

On Monday, October 26th we waited anxiously for our visitors. My class was on the rug finishing a math activity and every few minutes asked when they were coming. The second graders finally arrived with their interview sheets in hand. Each sheet had their name and the name of their new friend. Their teacher called their name and the second grader called the Kindergarterner's name that was on their interview sheet. I had one child absent so we put his partner in with another group. Marni was disappointed that she'd have to wait to do her own interview but plunged right in and had fun. The older children conducted their interviews working very diligently. They wrote

in all of the answers to the questions and then told their friend about themselves using the interview sheet as a guide. Then they each took a cup of popcorn, socialized with other pairs, and wandered around the room. My children became the guides and loved being the important person in the pair. The second grade boys went to the rice table with their partner and immediately became kindergarteners again! In our classroom we use rice instead of sand and the children pour, measure, and play with the rice. This is a favorite activity and the second graders seemed to think it was their playtime.

Our Popcorn Party lasted about twenty minutes. I felt it was a great introduction to our project and was very pleased with the enthusiasm. When the second graders left my kids wanted to know when they'd be back.

The next day I went into the second grade class to discuss their impressions of the first meeting. They were very excited about the whole program, some saying they had seen their friend on the bus or on the playground. After a brief discussion, I showed them the pattern blocks we use in our math program. Most of the children remembered them from kindergarten. We talked about patterns and did some examples on the Overhead Projector. I demonstrated how to make a pattern card and explained the activity for Wednesday. The helpers seemed to understand, asked questions, and showed excitement.

Unfortunately, on Wednesday I was home from school with a sick child so the activity was postponed until Monday. When I

returned and saw some of the second graders in the hall I was questioned about my absence and heard a lot of complaints about having to wait until Monday. However, with Halloween on Friday we felt it would be best to hold off a few days.

On Monday, November 2nd the second grade had eight children out of school, as well as, their teacher and student teacher. I went in and spoke to the helpers and we decided we'd meet on Wednesday and do a story instead of patterns. I suggested we do patterns another time. My children were also disappointed but understood that there were too many friends absent. This taught me again that flexibility was the norm!

On Thursday, November 5th we finally got together! The second graders came in and sat with their friends. I did a lesson using the story The Judge by Harve Zemack. First, we had a group discussion about books with photographs and books with drawings. We talked about true stories and pretend stories. We also went over some vocabulary in the story to clarify things for my kindergarteners. Then I read part of the story, which describes five people coming before a judge. They each describe a horrible creature in rhyme. The judge doesn't believe them and throws them in jail. The children helped me read the story repeating the rhyme about the monster.

At this point I stopped the story and we did some predicting exercises. I then had the pairs of children go to a seat and draw the monster. So far the book never shows them the monster so they are drawing from the description and their recall. The

children were very enthusiastic and had a lot of fun creating the monsters. I had to stop them when it was time to go home. I told them that the next time we'd finish our pictures and I'd read the rest of the book.

The following Monday, November 9th, the second graders came in, immediately found their partner, and finished their pictures. I gave them about eight minutes to do this. I called the group together to the rug and I showed each monster and read the sentence or words they wrote about it. Then I reread the entire book and they loved it. The students also loved seeing everyone else's monster. They made interesting comments about the pictures. Some of the second graders were upset because they forgot the wings and wanted to fix their monsters. I told them that they'd have another chance to do that but I had a special treat - the filmstrip of the story. Everyone loved the filmstrip and left saying good-bye to their friends. This activity really bonded the pairs, as well as, encouraged thinking, imagination, memory, and rhyming.

On November 13th we got together to do our pattern card activity. Before this activity I decided which pairs I would target and try to observe. I chose a pair of two high-ability students, Meredith (2) and Lauren (k); two low-ability students, Brandin (2) and Shane (k), a pair of same sex average-ability kids, Eddie (2) and Billy (k) - Billy is an average student but a big behavior problem; a boy-girl pair of average-ability kids, Marni (2) and Michael (k); and a threesome of boys, an

LD second grader, Matt, Kyle (2) and Matthew (k).

I made up a grid with the different things I'd like to observe; the children's interest, cooperation, need for teacher help, and a grasp of concepts. I was all ready with my clipboard! To an observer it would look like total chaos but there was a lot of work and learning going on. The pairs of children made their patterns with the blocks and then snap, clapped the pattern out. They took pieces of paper shaped like the blocks and made their pattern cards.

I found it very difficult to observe all five target pairs. First, I had to locate each pair in the crowded classroom. I also wanted to be available to all of the children, many of them needing constant guidance. The children enjoyed the activity and my children really seemed to benefit from the one-on-one work with pattern blocks. The second graders also seemed to benefit from reviewing patterning and it gave tham an opportunity to really help their younger friend.

When the children left I sat down and looked at my data sheet - empty! I then filled it out as well as I could and I did feel that it was very fresh in my memory. The main thing I noticed was that the low-ability children (second grader and kindergartener) had a lot of trouble with the whole lesson. Everyone else was enthusiatic and did great! Their pattern block cards reflected an understanding of patterns and they were able to express their pattern with their body.

Because of a tight schedule with Thanksgiving coming we

didn't see each other until November 23rd. I wanted to try having the second graders read a favorite book to my children. The older friends were to do some thinking about choosing the right book and practice reading it at home. I tried to incorporate this into Book Week also. The plan was to have the kindergarteners retell the story to the second grade friend. Then the children were to go into the hall and do a mural about their book. The children really enjoyed the activity. Most of my kindergarteners were actively listening during the reading part of the activity. Again, most of the children were able to retell the story in detail. Michael used Marni's exact expressions and gestures. I felt that most of the kindergarteners were sharpening their listening skills and were able to sequence the story. In most cases the second graders worked with their friend on the mural without being reminded of the instructions. There were two interesting observations. In one of the groups of three children, the two second graders were having a great time reading their book seeming to leave Matthew out. However, the next day in class Matthew was able to tell us what his story was about and did so accurately. He also said he enjoyed the activity. The other noticeable pair was Brandin and Shane. Brandin was the only child who missed the boat in choosing an appropriate book. Not a great reader, he choose a sixty page motorcycle book with difficult vocabulary. Shane was not at all interested in the story but did like the pictures. We finally had to stop Brandin's reading by suggesting that they

just look at the pictures. They also needed to be guided through drawing their picture on the mural. The other pairs did not have a problem at all and were able to follow the procedure and benefit from the activity.

The next day I went in to see the second graders. They discussed the activity with great enthusiasm. I asked if they'd like to do it again (absolutely!) and many reported on how their friend retold the story. They were very explicit in their critiques. We discussed suggestions for the same activity and came up with a few. Next time I may have some of the younger kids tape record their "story". The second graders also wanted to write stories about their book or act them out with their partner.

We discussed making flash cards and working with the children on their letter recognition, sound-letter association, and sight vocabulary. Because my children have different needs, I made a set of letters and words for the helpers to cut apart into flash cards. Each child was also given a baggie to put their cards in and a sheet of paper telling them what their partner needed to work on. I gave them lots of suggestions but asked them to think about how and what they'd like to do also. I then suggested that they write me notes telling me their impressions of the things we've done or about things they'd like to do. They don't write in journals so I didn't feel I could "assign" them a written project. I couldn't wait until Monday to see how they would do when left on their own a bit.

The flash card activity for reading readiness worked very well. My helpers were prepared on Monday, November 30th with their cut out flash cards. They had worked on them during their seat work and really took ownership of this activity. I had set out many games relating to letter recognition, sound-letter association, and reinforcing sight work vocabulary for use when they were done with their flash card games. Each pair found a spot in the room and set to work immediately. The helping friends were very serious about their task and it went beautifully. They played the games when they were done and many pairs merged in this part of the activity. In our follow-up discussion the next day one second grader said he liked this activity the best and one said she didn't like this very much - she thought it was boring. Some of the second graders took their letters and put then together to form three letter words for the kindergarteners to sound out. I was really impressed, especially when Kara, one of my kindergarteners working on words, did extremely well.

My children all liked the activity. They said it was "a fun way to practice their letters." Shane and Brandin, usually a pair that takes time to get going, were both motivated and did the task at hand. During playtime the next day, Hurray! my kids chose the new games to play. During my follow-up discussion with the second graders I reintroduced them to our kindergarten journals and the way stories are dictated. I explained that next week will be B week and our main thrust is on babies. On Monday,

I told them my kids would bring a baby picture and they would dictate a story about when they were a baby. We discussed how the second graders may really need to encourage their friend to tell a story and what to do when the second grader was confronted with a word that was difficult to spell. They were very concerned about this and we brainstormed things they could do (like bring a dictionary or sound it out). As usual the second graders can't wait until Monday. My children were at the point of asking me every morning, "Are our friends coming today?" If the answer was negative I heard moans. It got to be a regular ordeal.

We really had fun dictating stories about babies. Both the kindergarteners and second graders were excited and very involved during the entire activity. We used the library for the Cross-Age Tutoring and I'm sorry I didn't think of that sooner. The library provided a bigger area where the children were able to spread out and work without distractions.

The pairs found a spot where they could work and my kindergarteners dictated stories, some referring to their baby pictures. The second graders did a good job of encouraging them to give ideas and information. They asked very few questions and almost all of the second graders spelled independently. The kindergarteners illustrated their stories with a little help from their friend. My kindergarteners later said they liked talking about being babies with another 'kid'. Usually they dictate stories to adults. Only one pair (Shane and Brandin) needed some

teacher intervention. Shane (kindergartener) insisted on drawing his picture in the back of his journal and had to be redirected. He was still not at the point of trusting Brandin's judgement.

When the stories were finished the children found a book about babies, which I had placed on a table, and the second graders read their friend the book. As usual, the time flew by but this was the first time I had more time for observation and even took a few snapshots of the children working. I'm really sorry I didn't do that sooner! The question of the day is "Why did I have a bit more freedom?" Were the second graders getting better or was it that particular activity? I'd have to wait to evaluate that one.

The next day I read my children the stories. They were terrific and the class loved hearing them. Some of them are included. My second grade teacher-partner told me that when talking to her kids before the activity, most of them had forgotten what they were to do. This showed me that Tuesday is a good day for me to go in for feedback but maybe I would need to go in later in the week for a discussion of the next activity.

That is just what I started to do. I went in to speak to the helpers that Tuesday. We discussed how the dictation went and the comments were all favorable. I gave them a questionaire to fill out. The purpose was to gather information on their favorite activity, least favorite, suggestions, and their favorite thing about having a younger friend. I've included a few of these. If the helpers were older I probably would have

considered these more useful. Seven and eight year olds don't always give their own opinion and although these sheets were amusing and somewhat informative, I don't think they helped me in my planning.

I went in again that Friday, December 11th, to explain sorting junk boxes and the next activity. The children remembered the junk boxes and were very attuned to how to work with their friend on sorting and patterning. We did a few sample activities and I hoped they'd remember it all on Monday.

Monday came and success!! The second graders knew just what to do and the kindergarteners were also familiar with the junk boxes and love using them. They had patterned a lot but had not sorted as much as they needed to so this was an excellent exchange. My children got very good practice with sorting and were able to explain how they sorted their junk. I had each pair record the ways they sorted so that we could discuss and do this again in class. I also again used the Learning Center and the size of the room helped cut down on the noise level. Later that week we sorted with kindergarten partners in our own class. My children did an excellent job and were able to explain how they sorted and why.

Because of the chaos after Winter vacation my second grade teacher/partner and I decided to wait a week before getting together again. In the public library over vacation I met one of my second grade helpers and his mom. She shared with me the enthusiasm Jordan brings home about our project and he, of

course, asked me what we'd be doing the day we got back to school. When I told him we weren't going to meet the first week he was crushed. I told him I'd be in on Thursday to talk about what we'd do next.

I did go in the Thursday back from vacation and we discussed all the motor activities the second graders could do well and the kindergarteners are learning. Most of them were quick to forget how hard it was to learn to ride a two wheeler and roller skate. I pointed out that like everything else in life the more we practice the better we become at a task. We talked about throwing, catching, jumping rope, hopping and skipping, and how important it is for the kindergarteners to practice. I told them that on Monday we'd meet in the Multipurpose Room with the balls and jump ropes and they would do these activities with their partner. I spoke to our gym teacher and got a list of specific skills all the children needed help with.

When we met on Monday, January 11th each helping friend took a ball and the pairs found a spot of their own. I demonstrated the first skill we would do, simply ball rolling and they enthusuastically set to work. Some of the pairs made it into a game. Only Brandin and Shane were wild and needed teacher intervention, nothing had changed since vacation! After an adequate amount of time I stopped them and demonstrated the next task. We went through rolling and then bouncing with two hands and one hand (both right and left). Bouncing with one hand showed the second graders how important it was to work on these

skills with their friend. Working with the opposite hand was difficult. Then we practiced tossing the ball into the air and catching it and tossing and bouncing in various combinations. Time ran out before we could get to the jump ropes. The pairs exhibited interest and enthusiasm, and the second graders seemed to feel great about helping. The second grade feedback was very positive and they all seemed excited to tell me how much their friend needed help. They couldn't believe how 'bad' the kindergarteners were with balls. My children felt like they were playing on an equal level and liked that feeling, while gaining practice with their skills.

Our next activity centered around Wordless Picture Books. I had a real heyday in the library looking for and finding wordless picture books. They are all beautiful and I enjoyed myself immensely. I am sure my enthusiasm showed when I brought twenty-three of my favorites into the second graders for my Tuesday afternoon visit. I showed them the books and we talked about wordless picture books. I chose a book to sample and we went through it thinking of questions that could be asked. I emphasized the skills we were concentrating on; predicting, sequencing, oral language, and story line. I told my helpers to look through the books and choose one to share with their friend on Monday. The instruction was that after they "read" the book with their friend the kindergarteners were to dictate the story to them. Then they could work on a picture about the book together.

On Monday, January 25 we went to work. The library again proved to be a good place to work. There was a lot of space for quiet reading and working. The second graders were very "teacher like", asking meaningful questions. I was impressed and as usual my children seemed to enjoy the activity. They were very busy telling, remembering, and describing the pictures. Most of the pairs needed a little help and reminder about going on to the step of dictating the story. At the end of our worktime the pairs were all at different stages of completion.

I brought some of the stories in on Thursday to discuss with the tutors. I tried to impress upon them the importance of praise and encouragement to help the kindergarteners to express themselves. On Wednesday, we were going to finish and share our books with the group. We'd never had a true sharing period so I felt it would be a good experience and they were now comfortable with their partner and with the group. I also suggested they bring tape recorders so the kindergarteners could practice their oral language skills and sequencing.

On Wednesday we split the group so that half the children worked in the second grade room and half in my room. This was really to solve a space and noise problem since the Library was unavailable. The children in both rooms worked very independently. They reviewed the books, finished their stories, worked together on a picture and had the kindergarteners tape record the story. We worked together for about forth-five minutes and the pairs played letter and word games if they

finished early. I could see a real difference in the language and interactions of the pairs. They had definately grown together since November.

The following Monday we met to "share". I let the children form groups of three pairs so each group had six to eight children depending upon whether there were groups of two or three. We met in the Library but for some reason the children were very noisy and restless. They did exactly what I asked them to do; they shared their stories, pictures, and tapes. However, the children seemed to be interested in their own book more than listening to the other stories and tapes. It seemed like it took a long time to get organized and both my second-grade teacher partner and myself had trouble keeping everyone on task. This was the first time I felt a lack of control and I felt it was important to talk to the second graders about this.

When we had our weekly discussion the second graders offered praise and positive comments about their friends' performance during the sharing. Only one child said her friend didn't seem that interested. We talked about how the whole three week activity went and I told them that next Monday, February 15 we'd have our Valentine Party. I suggested they write down some things they like about their friend. I had my children do the same using dictation. My children had no trouble finding nice things to say and I've included a few of these "letters".

I mentioned to the second graders that the week after the party they could choose something to do with my students on

dinosaurs. We just finished 'D' week and my children loved doing dinosaur activities. The second graders are in the process of doing a dinosaur unit. I am going to let them choose, plan, and carry out an activity to teach my children more about dinosaurs.

I plan to have the class get together for more motor activites, reading and writing activities, and beginning addition and subtraction games. My list will probably go on as we come up with new ideas through our discussions and worktimes together.

A special bond had formed between the friends. I can feel it when I interview the pairs, when I observe the children working, through listening to their conversations, reading their stories, and seeing their finished projects. Although I will not be reporting on my data, I will still be observing and writing my data in my journal. Hopefully, this will help me when I do Cross-Age Tutoring again next year!

IN CONCLUSION

It's always difficult for me to evaluate something that I have 'lived' with for a long period of time. It seems like I have talked about, read about, and implemented Cross-Age Tutoring for over the last year. In actuality the implementation has only been for the last four months but the planning made the project come alive much earlier.

The more involved I became in my review of literature and planning, the more enthusiastic and excited I became. Although I have finished my data collecting for this project, the classes will continue to work together, hopefully until June.

My kindergarteners have expressed many positive feelings about our experience. They often quote their friend or mimic their friend in some way. They truly felt that the second graders were their friends and that is how the relationship emerged. They had fun learning through the activities presented.

While dictating Valentine notes to their friends, my children's comments ranged from "he's a good reader," "she's nice and a good drawer," to "we had fun taping stories and playing ball." My students seemed to comment on being read to and the projects revolving around the reading. A few of my students who are less mature and less interested in academics mainly dwelled on the motor activities. The second graders made comments about how their friend listened to them or liked a particular activity thus making the second graders feel very important.

Self-esteem was of major importance throughout my entire project. I felt that the special friend relationship promoted self-esteem on both sets of children. The second graders felt needed and important while my kindergarteners also felt special, wanted, and very important. To have the oldest children in our school seek them out and want to be with them was a feeling that was unique to my class.

In some ways, I felt that the Cross-Age Tutoring would be easier if the 'tutors' were older. When I really thought about it, the main difference would be that it would be easier for the receiving teacher. I spent a lot of my free time going into the second grade room to talk to them and introduce new activities. An older child might be more self-directed and independent in planning and remembering directions.

On the other hand, I wouldn't have traded my second graders' enthusiasm for anything. They have also been excellent at remembering and being "close to" the kindergarten concepts. The relationships and friendships that were formed were enhanced by the close age proximity.

The children did well in all of the activities but I felt that the more structured my planning was, the better able they were to get started. The pairs really needed that structure at the beginning but after four months they are ready to take more initiative in planning. Our next meeting, on March 1, has been totally planned by the second graders. They've invited their friends to their room for dinosaur activities. I'm really

excited to see how they do on their own.

The biggest change I would make when I do Cross-Age Tutoring again next year is to work hand in hand with the second grade teacher. This lack of sharing was really a situation I created, and knowing that I created it, I purposely stuck to it. Because this was MY research project, I felt that I needed to take full ownership for it. I worked with a wonderful second grade teacher with whom I have an excellent working relationship. However, I felt she was going out of her way to give me time from her rushed schedule and I didn't want to put any extra demands on her.

During our activities, Kathy was always around and ready to help the children. She also gave me excellent feedback as the project took form. As helpful as she was, I really feel that the project needs more teamwork. When I see how successful our Cross-Age Tutoring program was I have to think that with two teachers working together, it would benefit the curriculum of both classes and the students to a greater extent.

In talking to the second grade teacher about the project, she too felt the close age span was a positive factor. She said her children felt that they had new friends to help. Kathy commented on the improved self-esteem of her children, especially Margie. Margie is a second grader who had a low self-esteem and always felt she was on the low end of her classroom. We purposely paired her with Julie, a very motivated kindergartener who is developing slower academically. The girls did a beautiful job together and both of them gained confidence. Kathy also felt

that if Cross-Age Tutoring is done again she would take a bigger part in the planning. She was happy with all of the activities and results and also admitted that with one teacher planning it was very successful.

In final analysis, I am thrilled with my results. I did something I've always wanted to do and I feel I achieved and am continuing to achieve my main goal. I was able to individualize and provide reinforcement and/or enrichment for my students. At the same time the second graders and my students benefited greatly from the friendships that were formed.

Cross-Age Tutoring has proved to me that a school doesn't have to be a set of separate classrooms and graded levels. We, as teachers, can work together to provide skills. At the same time the children can learn to take responsibility and feel great about themselves. This was the first chance some of my kindergarteners had to be "a younger brother or sister figure" while some of Kathy's kids had their first opportunity to be in the big brother or sister role.

Now that my formal data is finished the second graders have taken part in more planning and they're doing a great job. Our Cross-Age Tutoring project is in full gear and I believe it will be a tradition at Pritchett School.

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